

# Spirit of the Age.

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## THE SPIRIT OF THE AGE.

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## Choir Literature.

### HEROIC DEFENCE OF A HOME.

A most beautiful and quiet scene then the morning on the Elkhorn, which smiled and sparkled in the light of a cloudless sky. On the 27th of April, 1793, could not have been found between the Kentucky river, and the mountains. A ride on a strongly built long cabin—half dwelling, half fortress—was the most conspicuous object in the foreground. A stream, the Elkhorn, too large to be called a creek, yet scarcely large enough, (except during a freshet), to be considered a river, its sloping banks clothed in the tender green of early spring, moved with rapid current, within half a mile of the front of the cabin. The entire clearing consisted of about forty acres, and on an arroy side by the dense forest, except on the east where a broad opening appeared, and the "Elkhorn" valley of a road was visible for two miles, leading apparently to some distant settlement.

The location was only three miles from Frankfort, then a small village, and about two miles from the nearest point on the Kentucky river, of which the Elkhorn is a tributary. Within the cleared area, labor had done much. The area, which had led the sunlight into the heart of the wilderness, had been promptly followed by the plough. The trees and oaks had been felled to clear the way, and the green blades, glistening with dew, that covered the southern slopes, gave promise of another abundant harvest.

The cabin was of double the usual size, for it contained two families. Its occupants were two brothers, James and John Cook, their wives and children, and a youth of seventeen, named John McAndrew, who came to live with them. The two brothers were originally from Connecticut, but emigrated to the Elkhorn some years before the time at which our narrative opens. Nearly four years had elapsed since they settled on the Elkhorn, and during the whole of that time they had been but one Indian.

James's household consisted of his wife, Mariam, like himself, a native of New England—a woman of commanding stature, and physical strength; and their daughter Alice, a fair golden-haired beauty; with a son, named John, who was a year younger than his sister in law, with two boys, of six and three years old. Young McAndrew was a fine, healthy young man, whose father had been killed in a encounter with a party of Wyandots near the Blue Licks, in that memorable year of the frontier, in the west, 1782.

Just as the sun's red disk became visible above the upper line of the forest of the east, the door of the cabin opened, and the brothers passed out. The scene spread before them was one of perfect repose. The morning mist had already lifted from the stream and was slowly sailing upward, while not a breath stirred to shake the pendant moisture from the forest leaves, or ripple the surface of the gently gliding stream. But the Cooks were not the men to look upon the landscape with a poet's eye, and with the simple observation that it was a fine growing morning, the elder, James, shouldered an axe, and followed by his brother, walked to a pile of chestnut timber, where they had been engaged the preceding day in splitting fence-rails.

They were both unarmed, and would have laughed at the idea of carrying weapons to protect themselves against the Indians—so confident had their long exemption from attack in isolation rendered them. But their dream of security was destined to be suddenly and awfully broken. They had not struck twenty blows with their axes, when a loud rifle,

"Two nearly, slowly, aimed to cut,"

eroded from a clump of maples about forty yards in advance of the nearest point of woods, and James Cook, who was in the act of chopping, springing like a ball into the air, and uttering a cry of dismay, fell with his face upward, quite dead.

John, although struck with three bullets and mortally wounded, started in a staggering run for the cabin, and fell a few feet from the door at the very moment that thirty Wyandots, armed and planned for war, leaped from the forest with a shout of demoniac exultation. For one moment the interior of the cabin was a scene of confusion; but the next, the young McAndrew rushed in for the purpose of bringing in the wounded man. He seized his shoulder and was in the act of dragging him towards the threshold, when an old Indian, who had reserved his charge when the valley was first, took deliberate aim at the young man and shot him through the brain. He fell across the body of James Cook.

Had the savages rushed upon the cabin at

that moment they would have encountered no resistance. The door was open and the women completely unprepared by the horror of the scene. But the savages stopped when they reached the body of James Cook, to scalp their victim. They knew that all the males of the household had fallen and that it was utterly impossible for the women and children to escape. As to any attempt at defence they did not think of that.

The three females, with arms outstretched towards the bleeding bodies of their protectors, and eyes dilated with horror, stood huddled together on the threshold, felt rather than saw that their only chance of avoiding immediate massacre was in valiantly themselves of the brief respite which the blood thirsty malignity of the savages allowed them. Rushing from the cabin, Mariam Cook grasped the corpse of her brother-in-law in her powerful arms, while in an instant, Hope and Alice seized each an arm of the unfortunate McAndrew, and in the next instant they had darted back with their burthens and closed and barred the door. The cabin was a solid structure, built of immense logs of chestnut and oak, completely impervious to rifle or musket shot, except at three or four points where narrow loopholes had been left for the convenience of reconnoitering or firing upon an enemy. These holes were about three feet from the ground, and barely enough to admit the play of a rifle barrel so as to command the whole front of the building. The door was formed of two thicknesses of white oak plank equally impervious to bullets, and when secured by the solid bar inside, was almost as impregnable as the walls of the cabin itself.

Having deposited their dead upon the cabin floor, Mariam, Hope and Alice began to prepare for a vigorous defence. Their faces no longer wore an expression of terror. The brows of the two matrons were knit with fierce determination, and their eyes sparkled with the instinct of revenge. Alice was no longer the timid and gentle maiden of yesterday. Her lover (for she had given her whole heart, and was now to have given her hand to McAndrew), and her beloved father lay dead before her, side by side; the red demons were in the act of scalping and mutilating the body of the uncle outside; and something of the tigeress flashed even in her eyes, half blinded as they were by tears. The two children alone exhibited signs of fear, but it was only perceptible in their blanched faces and quivering lips. They neither shrieked nor wept, but sat in a corner of the cabin with their arms locked together, watching the movement of the females, as they piled chests and benches and firewood against the door in order to strengthen the weakest part of defence.

Mariam Cook was the first to speak. After assisting to secure the door, she had knelt down at one of the loopholes to reconnoitre. At the very instant when she applied her eyes to the aperture, the group of savages, who had been engaged in stripping the body of her husband and hacking it with their knives and tomahawks, opened on the right and left, and a heavy volley in the war trappings of chief, advanced two steps and about the bloody scalp of the victim, derisively above his head, while the whole party joined in an infernal yell of scorn and exultation.

"My husband's rifle!" she shouted, springing to her feet; rushing across the cabin, she tore the weapon and accoutrements from the wall. But on trying the piece with the ramrod it proved to be unloaded. She thrust her hand into the pouch, but it contained nothing except musket bullets, which her husband had purchased at Frankfort a few days before, intending to run them into balls suitable for his rifle. The powder horn was full, but of what use was powder without balls. Dropping the weapon, she wrung her hands in despair. Suddenly a thought struck her, she seized one of the bullets, placed it between her teeth, and by a tremendous exertion bit it clear in two! Dashing a charge of powder into the barrel, she rammed down one of the fragments, primed and cocked the piece, and the next moment, its muzzle protruding through the aperture, covered the body of the chief now advancing at the head of his party towards the house. The quick eye of the savage caught the glimmer of the rifle sight as the sunbeams fell upon it, and he stopped; but before he had time to make a rush for cover, Mariam's finger pressed the trigger. When the puff of smoke from the discharge cleared away, she saw him reeling backward and clutching at the air in a vain effort to recover himself. Before the other Indians, who seemed paralyzed at the unexpected catastrophe, could afford him any assistance, he threw his hands wildly above his head, and whirling quickly around, fell upon his face. A shout of triumph burst from the lips of Mariam as she saw the effect of the avenging shot, and then withdrawing from the loopholes she commenced recharging the rifle.

The savages remained motionless for a few seconds, transfixed with astonishment, and then, lifting the body of the chief, withdrew hastily to a more respectful distance from the cabin, and its inmates half believed that their peril was over. They were soon undeceived.

After getting out of gun-shot the savages clustered together, and appeared for several minutes to be in close conversation. At the expiration of their parley, having apparently agreed upon their plan of action, the gang took open order and dashed with yell, at full speed towards the dwelling. As the

foremost came, Mariam Cook, who now stationed at another loophole, again discharged her rifle, and the unlucky Wyandot, shot through both legs, dropped in his tracks, with an involuntary shriek of agony. The other eleven kept on, and reaching the cabin six of them clambered on the roof, while the other five commenced firing through openings in the logs. Those on the roof quickly kindled a fire on the shingles which were soon in a light blaze. The destruction of the cabin and its inmates now seemed inevitable. But the garrison did not despair. There was a bugle-horn filled with water in the house; and Mariam with bucket in hand, mounted to the loft. Hope and Alice supplied her with water from below, and contrived to extinguish the flames so fast as they broke out, while she herself, enveloped and almost suffocated by steam and smoke, was invisible to the assailants. At length the water was exhausted, and one of the Indians observing that the efforts of the besieged were slackening, ventured to poke his head through one of the holes that had burned through the roof, to see how the land lay. The undaunted Mariam was standing at the moment within a few feet of the opening, and the instant she saw the face of an Indian she whirled the empty bucket around her head, and hurled it with half swing of her powerful arm, struck him directly in the forehead with the sharp edge of the staves. She heard the bones crash and the victim groan. A moment afterwards he was drawn off by his companions, three of whom then descended from the roof, leaving him in their arms.

Mariam now thought she heard the two that remained upon the roof tearing down the upper logs of the chimney, and presuming they intended to attempt an entrance that way, she ran down stairs to prepare for them. "The feather had the feather bed!" she shouted, as she reached the lower room; and this much prized article in the frontier's inventory of household chattels, was quickly dragged forth, and thrust, as a sacrifice, into the huge fireplace. By this time one of the Indians was fairly in the chimney and the other about to follow. "Thrust the lighted brand into it quick!" said Alice, in a moment the clouds of stifling smoke from the burning fenders were ascending the chimney. The savage made an attempt to scramble up again, but the pungent effluvia of the fenders overcame him, and he fell heavily on the hearth stone. In the meantime, Mariam had again grasped the rifle and held it clutched ready for his reception. Scarcely had he touched floor, when the iron bound branch crashed through his skull. The other Indian caught a whiff of the vapor in time to avoid a like fate, and precipitately descended from the roof.

Four of the thirteen Indians were now killed, but these casualties only added to the fury of the remainder. They were well aware that the cabin was occupied by women only, and nothing could be more degrading than to be baffled by a parcel of squaws. They now furiously assailed the door, with their tomahawks. To this proceeding the inmates could offer no resistance. In striking the savage who had fallen down the chimney, Mariam had broken the lock of her husband's rifle, the only one they had; and now, handing it to her sister-in-law, she armed herself with the axe of young McAndrew, which stood in a corner of the cabin, and prepared for the last extremity. Alice betook herself to a very formidable weapon—the slaughter knife of the establishment; and thus armed, the three women arranged themselves on either side of the door, determined to sell their lives as dearly as possible. In about a half an hour the Indians had nearly cut out two planks of the door beneath the bar—a space just sufficient for a man to force his body through in a stooping posture. They now brought a heavy piece of timber from the adjacent pile, and using it as a battering-ram, soon beat in the weakened portion of the door, at the same time driving the articles which had been piled against it into the middle of the cabin. Taunted, caution, by the losses which they had already sustained, they did not immediately attempt to enter through the breach, but thrusting in and crossing their rifles, discharged them into the house. In this they had a double design—that of killing, or maiming some of the occupants, and getting in under cover of the smoke.

Before the sound of the deafening broadside had died away, the feather crested head of a Wyandot warrior parted the smoke cloud which obscured the interior; but as he arose from a stooping posture in entering, Mariam's axe descended with tremendous force, cutting through shoulder and collar-bone clear into his chest. He dropped with a wild cry, half of defiance and half of agony. Another savage followed, and another, each to sink in turn under the axe of the courageous matron. The fifth she missed, but instantly, grappling with him, she held him powerless in her arms while Alice plunged the knife into his body. Of the next two who entered, one was disabled by a blow on the head from the butt of Hope's rifle, and the other very nearly decapitated by a sweep of Mariam's axe.

Of the thirteen warriors who had left their tribe for the war path, a few days before, only two were un wounded and capable of service—and they, seized with panic at the havoc made upon their companions by the long knives, abandoned the siege and fled back to the village. To the wounded they left behind, no quarter was given. To have spared their lives would have been

treason to the dead. Mariam's axe and the knife of Alice made short work of them, and this duty fulfilled, the family lost no time in proceeding to Frankfort. The next day a hundred mounted horsemen from the nearest village, and bringing in the bodies of the Cooks and McAndrew, started for the nearest Wyandot village, to take a wholesale revenge.—Sunday Times.

### PRETTY FANNY BROWN.

Fanny Brown was about seventeen when her father, Mr. David Brown, opened a baker's shop in a business street in the good year 1825. She was a very pretty girl, with fair hair, a small, smooth, crescent forehead, tiny features, small mouth, and all the rest. To look at her, you would have said, 'What a frail delicate creature! she must be consumptive; she'll never live to make old bones.' No such thing! she did live in spite of her appearance, and does live now, in spite of the course of adversity that might have spelled the bravest and worn out the most patient.

Before we proceed further with their history, we must say something of her parents; for the conduct of one generally affects the other, and pretty Fanny Brown found this to her cost. Alas! poor girl, good and diligent as she was, it took her many years to disentangle herself from the effects and consequences of her father's misconduct.

Now Mr. David Brown, the baker, was a light, active little man, with a pleasant, sunny-looking face, who loved pleasure a great deal and work very little. In his youth there had been his father's table to go to, and before he had lost this resource he had met with a young lady with two thousand five hundred pounds fortune, who fell in love with him and married him. For some ten or twelve years he managed to live upon this fortune, and did very little business to add to it; but by degrees it was nearly wasted. Then Mrs. Brown, who was a woman of much sagacity, and always had an eye to the main chance, like her celebrated prototype, Mrs. Nickleby, had a bone to pick with him, and threatened to take down the domestic castigator, which had long been in picket, if he did not turn over a new leaf and mend his ways. The consequence was, Mr. David Brown bought a blue bag and became a knight of the tramp for some three or four years, and thrived tolerably well by taking orders for a manufacturer of steel pens. But unfortunately the knights of the tramp are exposed to great temptations; they walk many miles in the day, they must eat and drink, they cannot return home to dinner, and they have to pass by many hundred public-houses and taverns within the twenty-four hours. To be brief, Mr. David Brown took to drinking; then Mrs. Brown like the famous Earl of Warwick, had to uncrown the king she had set up. She had made him a town traveler—he had to unmake him. She locked up the blue bag, and said to him, 'Go and do something else!' So Mr. David Brown opened a baker's shop in the year 1825, with his wife, his two daughters, and his little boy Tom.

At this time Fanny was scarcely seventeen, and her eldest sister Susan about a year older. The money that should have been laid out in developing the faculties of the children had been spent at the tavern by the father, so that the two girls had been taken home from school when they had about half finished their education. Mrs. Brown did all she could to overcome her husband's evil propensity; she railed at him from morning till night. But her spirited exertions were all thrown away, for her tongue drove him out of the house in the middle of the day, and he never returned home until quite unfit to be in a state which quite unfitted him to profit by her edifying remonstrances. What is the reason that women, who are such gentle creatures in making love, are so savage when it is made? But all women are not so; nor was Fanny Brown.

Not she, indeed; she was as quiet as a lamb. She and her sister Susan took it by turns to sit in the shop and serve the customers. There was a good deal to do in the shop; they sold bread and all sorts of cakes, besides bread; and many fine gentlemen, having somehow or other heard of pretty Fanny Brown, would come and chew a bun at the counter, and look at her soft, serious, melancholy face, in which that sorrow seemed to have collected which her tongue would not betray; for she never complained, gentle heart.

Fanny had more than one offer during the three or four years her father kept that shop; and as for compliments, there was no end to them. She was a thoughtful girl; nor had she been without reflecting what a sad husband her father had been to her mother, and what a parent to his children. In vain did the fine gentlemen press her fingers as they took the glass of soda-water from her pretty hand, on which none of them ever beheld the anonymous ring they had sent her by post; for a good girl, however modest she may be, knows her own value full well, and is not to be won lightly with toys. The man who deserved

her came at last, and found his own way to her heart; but more of that anon.

Her sister Susan, though older, was not quite so prudent. When the fine gentlemen pressed her fingers—I am afraid I must tell the truth—she sometimes smiled in return, and when they sent her a ring she wore it. She was not diligent like Fanny. Out of the shop she seldom did anything at all, leaving all the housework to her younger and more industrious sister. She was, however, perfectly willing to do double duty behind the counter, because there she was sure to hear the gentlemen's compliments.

Thus the Brown family went on for two or three years; Fanny Brown continued serious and good; Susan grew lighter and more conceited; Mrs. Brown fretted herself into a decline—she had left off scolding her husband, and the neighbors said it was inward mortification that was killing her; she ought to let it have vent.

Neighbors will talk—there is no help for it. When they have no large topic to canvass, they will put up with little ones, just to keep their tongues in—as the soldiers, when there is no enemy to fight, get up reviews and sham battles, to keep their swords and muskets from growing rusty. Think then, what a turmoil there must have been, when Dick Tuppence, the druggist's boy, first brought the news to mother Sandy, the grocer's wife, that Susan Brown had eloped the night before with Mr. Peter Drogget, the tailor clerk, and that his intentions could not be very honorable, because he had a wife and four children, whom he had run away from. This story was not all true, faults and follies of human nature, but as they are indeed, are never had enough for fame. Peter Drogget certainly had a wife, but the four children had all been born in the course of a few hours, and Rumor, that author of many things, was the father of them, not Peter Drogget.

This indiscretion of Susan's was a sad thing for Fanny. She had now all the work to do both in the shop and in the house. Her mother was too ill to help her, and instead of assisting her dutiful girl, she herself required to be waited on in her illness. Not even this cruel event could touch the weak heart of the degraded father. There he was as usual, half the day and half the night, spending the hard-earned penny of the unrepining girl, in that dull, smoky, uncomfortable parlor, talking and jesting, and laughing with a gang of miserable debauchees, whilst his wife was lingering and dying in a half-furnished attic, and his eldest child was walking the streets.

Oh! those public houses! what beds of crime they are!—what unseen wretchedness they produce! How many an honest family have been brought to the poor-house by the public house at the corner! We talk of taxation, and groan at the expenses of government—what are they compared to the taxes which men lay upon themselves? Fathers complain that they have not bread enough for themselves and their families. Whereas the public house will take one shilling in five from the casual frequenter, and one shilling in two from the drunkard. There are thousands of cases of single and married working men, who spend half their wages at the public house. There are some who spend every shilling there, except the trifle the poor mis-rable wife contrives to coax out of them. To tolerate the public house, as it is done for the sake of exercise, is to invite a people to debauch themselves; it is undoing with one hand what you do with the other, when you open a church. There is no difference between a flag opening a class-room to teach little boys the art of picking pockets in the street and taking old gentlemen's silk pocket handkerchiefs and silver snuff-boxes, and a government tolerating a new public house for the people to get drunk at, that they may break up families, and learn to live by crime when they have wasted their substance. Taverns and public houses may be necessary, but not as necessary surely as baker's shops; then why are there five hundred for one baker? why indeed?

It was about the 20th of May, 1830, and the clock had just struck in the afternoon. Mr. Brown had staid along the inside of the counter, to the till; it was empty. There was no one in the shop, nor had there been a single customer for two hours before. Poor Fanny was sitting in the little parlor working hard at her needle.

She was now two-and-twenty years old, thin and pale, a little more serious perhaps, but as pretty as she had ever been, for melancholy does not spoil a comely face. She was in deep mourning. Her mother had died about six weeks before.

Mr. Brown had a black coat on, too, because he always wore black coats; but with that exception, and the piece of crape round his hat, there was nothing to show that he was in mourning for the poor woman, who had brought him the money which had supported him in his extravagance for three-and-twenty years. On finding the till empty, he looked

very blank at first, then he looked through the glass partition at his good daughter.

She was bending her long lovely neck over a shirt of his, which she was patching up for him. Her pretty taper, rather red fingers (reddened with hard house work) were actively passing through the stitches.

"Fanny," said he hoarsely.

"Yes, father," she replied, without looking up.

He coughed. It was evident he had something that he did not like to say.

"Fanny," he repeated, somewhat louder.

The poor lonely girl raised her head and looked at him without answering. Her eyes were very red, but her sweet, pensive face was tearless.

Fanny Brown said in a way to hurried at night, when she was alone, that the tears might not approach her father. He had taken every thing from her, but her love. The father was gone, the school was gone; her pretty niece Susan, her only playmate, was gone; her mother was dead; even her little brother Tom, who was a fine spirited boy, and gone to sea as a common sailor, unwilling to be an idle witness of the family distress. He had taken every thing away from her but her love for him. He knew it all, and yet it did not melt him. He knew it all? No, there was one sacrifice he was not aware of—Fanny Brown loved.

Yes, she loved, and never told him. How deep, trenchant, and consuming was that love which is silent, never shows the vulgar eye, and never gratifies any of the multitudes of idle curiosity which the holiday love of most people partake of!

Fanny Brown loved Richard Brown, the bookkeeper's clerk, a fine young man of eight-and-twenty, who had been ten years with his master and had saved up a thousand dollars. He had been engaged for her two years before, and she had accepted by the mother and sister. During the whole of those two years, he had been a daily visitor at the public house, and had never met her there, when by accident young Richard, in the fullness of a lover's love, in the yearning of his beloved, had frequented the shop and stayed longer than usual. Fanny Brown had drunk most deeply of the poison of his eyes, and had been very distinguished Richard had been the grandfather; so that he was still a danger to him. A drunken man is not so much to be trusted. Fanny Brown had agreed that the marriage should be solemnized in April, but Mrs. Brown, who was in the latter end of March, died a few days. Fanny Brown was then obliged to put on a black mourning dress, and a white one. The union of her and heart was thus interrupted.

Mr. Brown looked at the daughter, and came into his mind one of those rare and faint reminiscences which sometimes steal into the most prosaic of our hearts.

He walked into the little parlor, laid his hands upon her two pale cheeks, raised her pretty head up and kissed her. He had not done so for many a long day.

"Fanny," said he, "there is no money in the till."

"No, father."

"Have you got a shilling in your pocket?" he stammered.

She gave him one. It had cost her a night to earn it; but still he was her father, and she could not help to refuse him even the means of his depravity.

"Shall I change it?" said he. You may want some of it yourself before I come home."

"No, father," replied Fanny; "I have already dined—I have all I require."

This was true, for the little angel required but little, and seemed to live on air.

David Brown gave her another kiss and stole off to his haunt.

Fanny was left alone. She was young and she was spending her youth; she was lovely, and she was wasting her beauty in almost utter solitude. How many hours would she sit working in the back parlor, before her miserable parent, heavy with his last night's carousal, would come down stairs! Then, when he stole out in the middle of the day, how many long, weary hours, would she sit alone waiting his return, till long after midnight! How the poor girl got him up stairs to his chamber, was a miracle.

The shop was no longer frequented as it used to be; the novelty was gone—Susan, who had been a great attraction to a host of wild, thoughtless young fellows, was no more there to engage them by her sunny smiles. Fanny could not marry everybody; she was engaged to Richard, and had only a serious look for the rest. They did not like so cold a reception, so they dropped off, all except Richard, who usually visited her after business time for a couple of hours.

On the present occasion, about the 20th of May, 1830, she had sat by herself until past seven o'clock, when a man of shabby genteel appearance came into the shop: Fanny left her work upon the table and hastened behind the counter.